OLMSTED BROTHERS 1903-1941

Boulevards & Parkways

To link their planned system of parks, the Olmsted Brothers designed an integrated system of boulevards and scenic roadways. The Olmsted Brothers plan called for two categories of landscaped roadways: boulevards and parkways. The pure distinction between the two was often blurred, and some Seattle roadways contain elements of both boulevard and parkway.

This portion of Lake Washington Boulevard was more formal in design, featuring tall trees at regular intervals and a walking path between the road and the lake.

Physical Characteristics

Spatial Organization. Boulevards and parkways were intended to link different parts of the City to parks or scenic resources: For example, Mount Baker Boulevard (a formal boulevard) and Cheasty Boulevard (a naturalistic parkway) connected Beacon Hill to Lake Washington.

Boulevards were to be of a formal design, generally 200-feet wide, and were uniformly-wide for long distances. They generally contained one or more formally planted grass strips and symmetric rows of deciduous trees. Parkways were to provide scenic pleasure drives and were to be more informal in design, located in areas where there was an appreciable amount of natural landscape beauty, and had few intersections with other roadways.

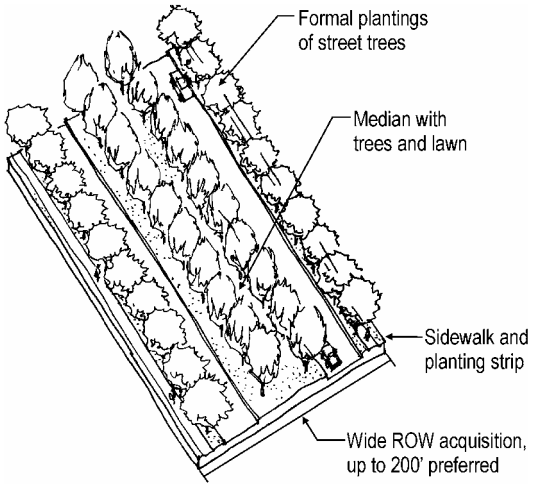


Figure 17: Olmsted Brothers design principles for formal boulevards.

Parkway plantings were informal or naturalistic in design. From preliminary plans, it is clear that the Olmsted Brothers considered the roadway as a sequential experience: They designed framed views, open space, and roadway edges to vary as the motorist progressed.

Lake Washington Boulevard curves through Colman Park, following the land's natural contours.

OLMSTED BROTHERS 1903-1941

Boulevards & Parkways

Natural Systems and Features. Roadways were fit to the natural contours of the land as much as possible, and were only altered when necessary for road safety. The preliminary plans for Lake Washington Boulevard, for example, show that the designers located and graded the roadway to minimize disruption to the landforms and vegetation and to provide views for motorists, while creating gentle slopes for safe road travel.

Views and Vistas. Views were very important, especially on the roadway. Plantings and/or grade changes were designed to achieve desired views.

Circulation. Paths were located on the outside of the roadway.

Vegetation. Plans incorporated native vegetation as much as possible on all roadways, but especially the informal parkway. On formal boulevards, big trees were preferred, and few shrubs were planted. If it was desired and there was space, a lawn may have been provided. Rhythmic planting was important to the formal design of the boulevard.

Significance

Boulevards and parkways designed by the Olmsted Brothers are of historical significance because they are part of a larger linked system that has remained largely intact. They have strong artistic, architectural and engineering qualities and were designed by an influential landscape architect.

Intact Resources

Some of the extant boulevard and parkway sections planned by the Olmsted Brothers include Lake Washington Boulevard through Frink and Colman Parks as well as Leschi and Lakeview Parks.

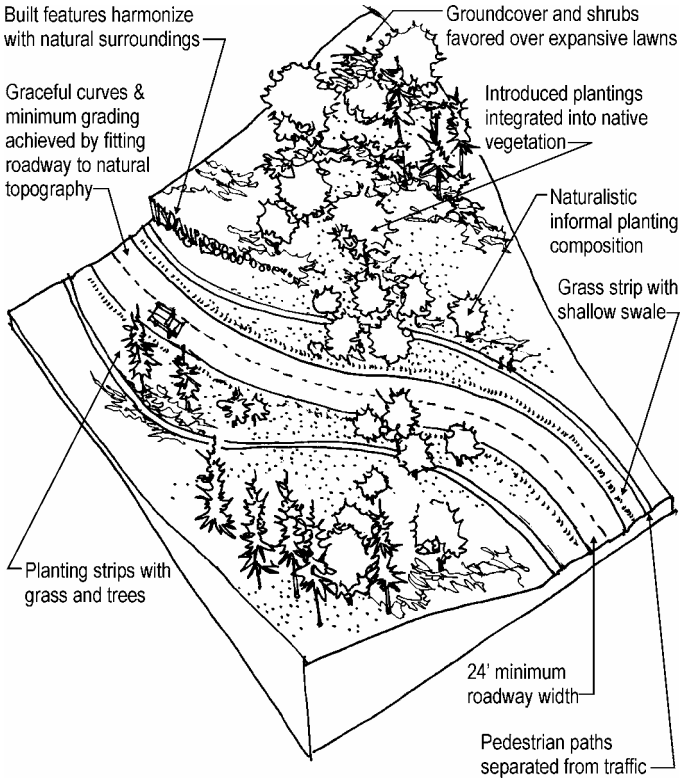


Figure 18: Olmsted Brothers design principles for parkways and "scenic drives".

OLMSTED BROTHERS 1903-1941

Boulevards & Parkways

Table 4: Olmsted Brothers Era Boulevards and Parkways

Remaining Resources	Year Established	Year Developed	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Blaine Boulevard			Olmsted Brothers		Part of Lake Washington Blvd.
Cheasty Boulevard	1910		City of Seattle	C	
Frink Boulevard		1909	Olmsted Brothers		Part of Lake Washington Blvd.
Green Lake Boulevard			Olmsted Brothers		
Hunter Boulevard			E. O. Schwagerl		
Interlaken Boulevard			Olmsted Brothers		
Lake Washington Blvd.	1905		Olmsted Brothers		
Magnolia Boulevard	1909	1910			Was not paved until 1950s.
Montlake Boulevard			Olmsted Brothers		Part of Lake Washington Blvd. Altered considerably due to the SR 520 freeway.
Mt. Baker Boulevard	1907				One of the widest boulevards in the park system.
Puget Boulevard					Acquired, but never developed.
Queen Anne Parkway	1911			C	Private development.
Ravenna Boulevard	1912	1925	Olmsted Brothers		One of most extensive and formal boulevards. The Olmsted design is significantly altered.
Schmitz Boulevard		1909	Olmsted Brothers		Once an entrance to Schmitz Park.
Seward Park Avenue			Olmsted Brothers		Private development. Now a street.
17th Avenue NE			Olmsted Brothers		One of the most formal boulevards. Now a street.
Washington Park Blvd.			Olmsted Brothers		Part of Lake Washington Blvd.

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

OLMSTED BROTHERS 1903-1941

Building & Structures

John C. Olmsted recommended various structures in all of his parks and playgrounds, and on many of his roadways, to support the intended use of the site. Most of these, however, were designed and built by others at a later date. Among the remaining Olmsted Brothers-designed buildings and structures in Seattle parks that retain much of their original design are the Volunteer Park shelter house, Colman and Frink Park bridges, the stone plinth at Seward Park, and the South Park Playground entry pylons.

The Volunteer Park shelter house is the only Olmsted Brothers-designed building that still retains its original design.

Physical Characteristics

Typical Types and Uses. The Olmsted Brothers recommended buildings for a variety of uses: shelter houses, band stands, comfort stations, superintendent's cottages, and service buildings, to name a few. Lighting and seating were also recommended.

Location and Siting. Service buildings were tucked into corners and were often partially screened by vegetation. A building was rarely designed as a prominent feature unless it was of a unique function or served as a focal feature in a formal park, such as the Volunteer Park water tower. In playgrounds, a field house or wading pool would often be centrally located and serve as an activity focus.

Style. Most Olmsted Brothers-designed buildings and structures in Seattle were of a rustic or craftsman style.

Bridge along Frink Boulevard.

OLMSTED BROTHERS 1903-1941

Building & Structures

Materials and Construction Methods. Wood was typically the material of choice, as it was generally recommended that structures be initially constructed as temporary structures to be replaced at a later date when additional funding was available (park land acquisition was the priority). Those buildings which were more prominent in the park or playground design were generally made of a more durable material, such as masonry. Bridges were typically constructed of concrete.

Significance

Structures designed by Olmsted Brothers are of historic significance because of their association with the firm and their relative scarcity.

Intact Resources

Few structures outside Volunteer Park were designed in collaboration with the Olmsted Brothers. However, there are many park buildings and structures built between 1903 and World War II that, while not specifically designed by the Olmsted Brothers, nevertheless adhere to the design principles articulated by them. These buildings and structures also merit consideration in preservation planning as they support the general and historical character of the parks in which they are situated.

It should be noted that many of these have been modified. For example, the Hiawatha Playfield field house, while it has been modified with a gym addition and brick veneer exterior, still retains extant features, such as the upstairs room. The table on the following pages outlines a number of buildings and structures, none of which – except for the Volunteer Park shelter house – were designed by the Olmsted Brothers, but were rather either recommended or influenced by them.

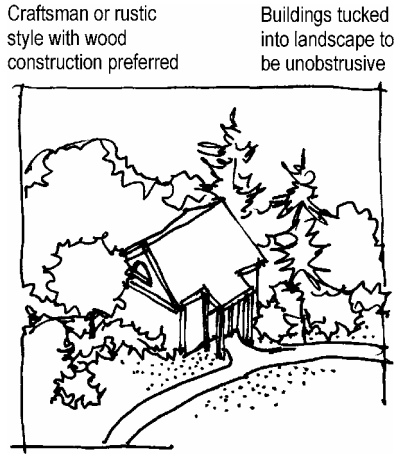


Figure 19: Principles of building design for parks recommended by the Olmsted Brothers.

OLMSTED BROTHERS 1903-1941

Building & Structures

Table 5: Olmsted Brothers Era Remaining Buildings and Structures

NOTE: Of the following buildings and structures, only the **Volunteer Park shelter house** was designed by the Olmsted Brothers.

Remaining Resources	Year Built	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Alki Playfield comfort station	1923			Relocated in 1930 to current location (to be demolished in 2003).
Brighton Playfield shelter house	1933			Remodeled in 1973.
Cowen Park shelter house	1909	Parks Department		Remodeled in 1929 using Olmsted Brothers plan as a guide.
Gilman Playfield shelter house	1932			Remodeled in 1973.
Golden Gardens Park bathhouse and concession	1929	E. R. Hoffman, Parks Engineer		Concession added in 1950.
Green Lake Park Bathhouse Theater	1928			Remodeled in 1970.
Green Lake Park comfort station #1				
Green Lake Park field house and community center	1929	E. R. Hoffman, Parks Engineer		Evans Pool added in 1955.
Green Lake Park concession (near bathhouse)	1930			
Hiawatha Playfield field house	1911	Bebb & Mendel, architects		Remodeled in 1949; original Crafts-man design substantially altered by addition of brick veneer and large gymnasium. Parts of interior and roof form are extant features of original field house.
Highland Park Playfield shelter house	1938			

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

OLMSTED BROTHERS 1903-1941

Building & Structures

Remaining Resources	Year Built	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Jackson Park Golf Course clubhouse	1930			Significant later additions and alterations.
Jefferson Park Golf Course clubhouse	1915			Original clubhouse burned in 1919 and rebuilt. Remodeled and enlarged by WPA in 1936.
Kinnear Park comfort station	1929	E. R. Hoffman, Parks Engineer & J. Mattson, Sr. Draftsman	C	Art Deco style.
Lincoln Park shelter house	1932	M. Lee Burton, Parks		
Leschi Park comfort station	1929			
Lincoln Park maintenance shop	1931			
Lower Woodland Park comfort station #1	1924			Originally built to serve Parks Automobile Tourist Camp.
Lower Woodland Park shelter house	1929			Now the Recreation Information Office.
Madison Park bathhouse	1919			Remodeled in 1929 and later in 1938 by WPA.
Madrona Park bathhouse	1927			Remodeled in 1971.
Magnolia Park comfort station	1927	L. Glenn Hall, landscape architect		
Maple Leaf Playfield shelter house	1932			
Mt. Baker Park comfort station	1928			
Ravenna Park comfort station	1926	L. Glenn Hall, landscape architect		

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

OLMSTED BROTHERS 1903-1941

Building & Structures

Remaining Resources	Year Built	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Ravenna Park shelter house	1932			
Seward Park bathhouse	1927	L. Glenn Hall, landscape architect		North and south ends completed in 1927. Altered/expanded later by WPA. Remodeled in 1970 to art studio.
Seward Park comfort station #1	1932	M. Lee Burton, Parks		
Seward Park comfort station #2	1932	M. Lee Burton, Parks		
Seward Park Inn	1927	Alban Shay	C	
Volunteer Park shelter house	**1910**	**Olmsted Brothers**		**Only intact Olmsted Brothers-designed building.**
Volunteer Park conservatory	1912	Lord & Burnham	C	
Volunteer Park cottage	1909			
Volunteer Park horticulture and grounds maintenance facility	1909			
Washington Park Playfield shelter house	1930	D. N. McDonald, Sr. Draftsman & E. R. Hoffman, Parks Eng.		
Woodland Park Zoo comfort station (water tower)	1931			
Woodland Park Zoo commissary and dispensary	1930			Now called “Keeper Central.”
Woodland Park Zoo foreman’s residence	1911			Now used as zoo offices.
Woodland Park Zoo maintenance shops	1917 1925			Two separate buildings in a single shop complex. Now used as zoo commissary.

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

PLAYGROUND MOVEMENT 1907-1920

The Playground Movement "…saw a need for 'sand gardens,' play equipment, and playing fields for urban children who had no family yards or access to country fields… The ultimate purpose of the playground… was to help shape a cohesive, stable, modern society out of a disparate and disruptive population [of immigrants]."

– from *Planning the Twentieth-Century American City*, 1996.

The Playground Movement advocated neighborhood playgrounds in which children could participate in supervised recreation. The movement was fueled largely by the idea that a good and upright society would begin with clean and disciplined children. The nation-wide movement was formalized in 1906 with the first White House conference on playgrounds, which resulted in the founding of the Playground Association of America (later the National Recreation Association).

Seattle formally joined the national Playground Movement in 1908 when Austin E. Griffiths founded the Seattle Playground Association. A year earlier, the City's first supervised playground was established at what is today Cal Anderson Park. Before awareness was developed regarding the need for supervised recreation, playgrounds were seldom mentioned. In 1911, though, thanks to a hearty campaign and cooperation from the School Board, Seattle boasted fifteen unique playgrounds – fully equipped with steel apparatus, supervision, ball grounds, running tracks, wading pools, and field houses – and many more play areas located within parks.

Many of the playgrounds and structures built during this period and ensuing years as a result of this movement remain.

Seattle Playground Association

The purpose of the Seattle Playground Association is "…to procure the dedication, creation and equipment of public playgrounds and public places and buildings for pastime, games, sports, bathing, recreation and rest and to secure facilities and provide opportunities for and to promote the spirit and love of recreation, fair play and wholesome sport among the people of Seattle and their children."

– from the *Constitution of the Seattle Playground Association*, adopted December 5, 1908 (Austin E. Griffiths Collection).

"Our association's purpose is social construction. The Playground is the inherent right of every boy and girl in the city. There should be one within walking distance of every child... numerous and small open places for play and recreation… as distinguished from parks and boulevards… Fresh air, sunshine, freedom and play, leadership and example vitalize, strengthen and educate the race and fight back disease and crime more than jails, asylums and reformations combined… The children of rich and poor alike need it, but the poor more than the rich… The playground is the battlefield for a vigorous race."

– from an Austin E. Griffiths speech, delivered February 5, 1910 (Austin E. Griffiths Collection).

PLAYGROUND MOVEMENT 1907-1920

Playgrounds

Playgrounds established in Seattle during the Playground Movement provided a place where urban children could engage in supervised recreation to build both muscles and morals. They were commonly constructed and/or used in conjunction with an adjacent or nearby school.

Physical Characteristics

Spatial Organization. The playgrounds were designed in formal and geometric patterns with penetrable edges. If the design included a field house, it was positioned near the center of activity. All playground designs included at least some of the following features: a shelter house, steel gymnastic apparatus, ball grounds (for tennis, baseball, football, basketball, handball, or cricket), swings, teeter-totters, a sand box, a wading pool, a cinder running track, or an athletic field.

Natural Systems and Features. To accommodate orderly recreation, playgrounds were sited on flat terrain, though they might feature more steep slopes along their edges. Most did not feature prominent natural features.

Circulation. Entries to the playgrounds were generally located at the corners of the site or adjacent to an adjoining school.

Buildings and Structures. The focus of the playground was generally the field house, which provided year-round indoor recreation. Other structural elements included shelters, wading pools, and sand boxes. Swings, slides, teeter-totters, and other play structures constructed of metal poles and piping were installed within the playground.

Constructed Water Features. Playgrounds generally featured a wading pool.

(East) Queen Anne Playfield featured steel apparatus, tennis courts, a basketball and play court, a wading pool, and supervision!

Lincoln Playfield (today Cal Anderson Park), Seattle's first playground with supervised recreation, was situated on flat terrain and featured an entrance at each corner.

PLAYGROUND MOVEMENT 1907-1920

Playgrounds

Vegetation. Trees and other vegetation were generally located at the periphery of the site to avoid conflict with athletic activities.

Significance

Playgrounds built during the Playground Movement are significant because they are directly connected to a movement which had a lasting impact on the community. They represent the first facilities dedicated to and constructed specifically for the well-being of children. In some cases, they may significantly contribute to the architectural and historical character of the local neighborhood.

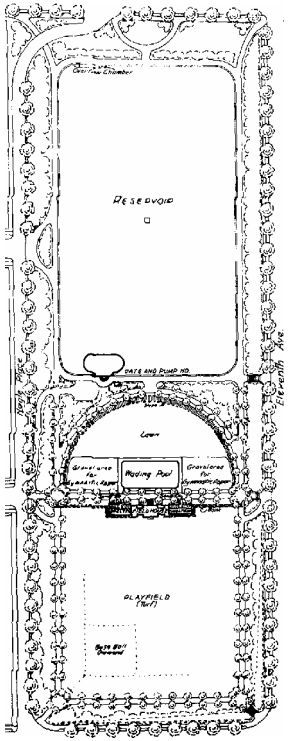
Intact Resources

Most of the playgrounds constructed during this period still remain, though their initial designs have been substantially altered. In the spirit of the original playground advocates, though, the particulars of a playground's design matter only to the extent that the facilities support orderly play (and, if the design did not accomplish this, it was thought that supervision would). What mattered most to playground advocates was that there be a playground within walking distance of every child.

Madrona, University, Gilman, Highland Park, and Ross are intact examples of those playgrounds established early in the last century and still in use today. In most cases, the spatial characteristics have remained the same over time, while play apparatus has evolved into more elaborate structures set in play areas.

Cal Anderson Park

Developed in 1907 as Seattle's first playground with supervised recreation, Lincoln Park – later named Broadway Playfield, Bobby Morris Playfield, and now Cal Anderson Park – has seen many changes throughout the years. The imprints of the original design are evident in today's park, such as the gatehouse and sports field. Pictured below are the Olmsted Brothers' 1904 Preliminary Plan for the park (below left) and Seattle Parks and Recreations' current plan for reconstruction (below right).



PLAYGROUND MOVEMENT 1907-1920

Playgrounds

Table 6: Playground Movement Era Remaining Playgrounds

Remaining Resources	Year Established	Year Developed	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Alki Playfield	1910	1910			Developed as a result of Olmsted recommendation, though not according to Olmsted plan.
Ballard Playfield	1909	1911			Community center replaced the field house in 1987.
Bayview Playfield	1914	1914			
Beacon Hill Playfield	1907	1926			Current developed atop old reservoir in 1926.
Brighton Playfield	1913	1933			Though construction began in 1913, progress was slow due to tree stumps and necessary fill.
Cal Anderson Park	1901	1908	Olmsted Brothers		Originally named Lincoln Playfield, this was Seattle's first supervised playground. See description on previous page.
Colman Playfield	1910	1940			Built by the WPA.
B. F. Day Playground	1907	1909			
Delridge Playfield	1912	1923			Used during World War II as housing for steel mill workers. Originally known as Youngstown Playfield.
East Queen Anne PF	1910	1911			Redeveloped entirely during Forward Thrust.

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

PLAYGROUND MOVEMENT 1907-1920

Playgrounds

Remaining Resources	Year Established	Year Developed	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Froula Playground	1911				
Garfield Playfield	1911	1912			
Hutchinson Playfield	1910	1911	Alfons V. Peterson		Originally named Rainier Beach Playfield; renamed in 1965.
Maple Leaf Playfield	1911	1932			
Miller Playfield	1906				First land donated to the City for the purpose of a play-ground. Substantially redeveloped in 1970's.
Rainier Playfield	1910	1930	Renshaw, Parks & E. R. Hoffman, Parks Engineer		Originally named Columbia Playfield; changed in 1928. The site was recommended by the Olmsted Brothers.
Rogers Playfield	1907	1931			One of the first four playgrounds to be "improved, equipped and supervised". First playground to be lighted.
Ross Playfield	1909	1929	Clarks, Parks & E. R. Hoffman, Parks Engineer		
South Park Playfield	1910	1912			
University Playfield	1910	1911			First playground to be enclosed with a wire fence, gates and locks.

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

PLAYGROUND MOVEMENT 1907-1920

Buildings & Structures

Playground Movement buildings and structures provided for the comfort and service of playground patrons, both children and their caretakers. Some of them were intended to be activity foci and figured prominently into the playground's design.

Physical Characteristics

Typical Types and Uses. Some playgrounds featured a large field house or smaller shelter house, which was used for year-round indoor recreation. Other common structures included shelters, wading pools, sand boxes, and play equipment, such as swings, teeter-totters, and "steel apparatus."

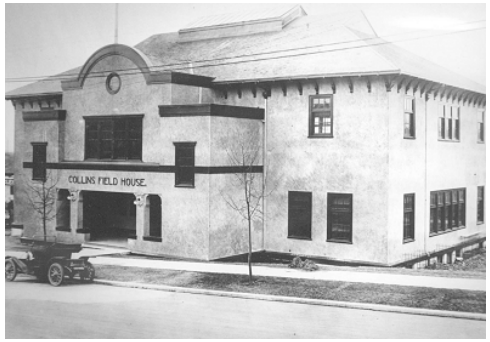
Location and Siting. Since playground structures were functionally essential, they were integral to overall site design. The field house was generally placed centrally, with all recreation areas sited nearby.

Style. Because the field houses were utilitarian structures with multipurpose rooms inside, they tended to feature blocky proportions and large, multi-paned windows. Many structures were craftsman-inspired and featured simple exterior appearances similar to the wood-frame school buildings of the time.

Materials and Construction Methods. Wood frame construction was widely used in the original field houses, but by the 1930's, shelter houses built by WPA featured brick exteriors.

Indoor recreation at Ballard Field House.

Supervised recreation in the wading pool and sandbox at Lincoln Playfield, now Cal Anderson Park.



Collins Field House represented a Craftsman-inspired style with wood frame construction.

PLAYGROUND MOVEMENT 1907-1920

Buildings & Structures

Significance

Structures built during the Playground Movement are significant because they are directly connected to a movement that had a lasting impact on the community. Some structures contain unique features and stylistic detailing.

Intact Resources

There are numerous shelter houses from the Playground Movement that still exist. Of the field houses built between 1910 and 1929 at Ballard, Collins (no longer a park site), Hiawatha, South Park, Green Lake, and Rainier, only Hiawatha and Green Lake remain today, and both have been substantially altered over the years.

Table 7: Playground Movement Era Remaining Buildings and Structures

Remaining Resources	Year Built	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Hiawatha Playfield field house	1911			Remodeled in 1949, the original Craftsman design was substantially altered by the addition of brick veneer and a large gymnasium.
Green Lake Community Center	1929			Evans Pool added in 1954.

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

FEDERAL RELIEF 1935-1943

Among a series of federal relief programs of the New Deal, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was put in place to stem massive levels of unemployment common during the Great Depression. The WPA appropriated funds and created projects to employ millions of Americans in fields as varied as the arts, highway and building construction, slum clearance, rural rehabilitation, and reforestation. WPA projects drew from labor pools of millions of unemployed men, both skilled and unskilled, seeking any sort of work to support their families.

"The WPA encouraged the preparation of plans for various projects for which there might be no immediate need but which would be of great future benefit to the communities and the Nation."

– from *Final Report on the WPA Program*, 1946.

Seattle, like other depressed cities, sought the aid of the WPA to boost its local economy and its citizens' moral. The City's 1931 10-year parks plan, which sought to better use existing facilities, was a primary source for WPA projects. Formerly unemployed men were put to work across the City, building golf courses, constructing structures in parks, and performing deferred parks maintenance.

Typical of the general attitude of the Great Depression, WPA projects were efficient and realistic. Materials and design were chosen to best use available resources, which included the skills set of local workers and cost of readily-available local materials.

In Seattle, the various federal relief agencies, notably the WPA, built approximately 40 buildings or structures and provided labor for numerous parks and recreation projects, including the construction of stairs and retaining walls, landscape grading, and development of four park complexes – Jefferson Park Golf Course, Camp Long, Seward Park Fish Hatchery, and the West Seattle Recreation Area (West Seattle Stadium and West Seattle Golf Course).

WPA laborers construct steps at Golden Gardens Park, May 15, 1936.

FEDERAL RELIEF
1935-1943

Buildings & Structures

Physical Characteristics

Typical Types and Uses. The WPA built a variety of buildings and structures in Seattle's parks, playgrounds, and golf courses, including shelters, ponds, club houses, cabins, comfort stations, and field houses. Efficiency and utility were primary concerns, but because the structures were constructed for a variety of purposes in many different settings, they vary widely in size, type, and style.

The Mediterranean Revival-style Colman Playfield shelter house was designed by a local architect with influence from the nearby Italian community.

Style. WPA-era buildings and structures were very individualized as they used local materials and were individually designed by a variety of individuals and organizations. In general, the style was simple but stable and often reflected the personality of the location, characteristics of its use, or popularity of certain styles. As illustrated by the examples at right, WPA structures were often finely designed despite their utilitarian and economic development objectives.

Jefferson Park Golf Course Club House was constructed with Colonial Revival stylistic features.

Materials and Construction Methods. Funds and skilled labor were often limited. Architects typically had to consider the skills of their work force and available materials in designing the buildings. Nevertheless, some buildings feature fine craftsmanship and creative designs. Buildings and structures were typically built of whatever material was cheaply available, including cobblestones salvaged from a recently repaved city street.

The intricate stonework and stylistic detailing of the Camp Long Office and Clubhouse represents the craftsmanship of WPA construction.

FEDERAL RELIEF 1935-1943

Buildings & Structures

Significance

Buildings and structures built by the WPA are of historic significance because they are associated with the Great Depression. The WPA made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history and the remaining architectural resources embody the distinctive characteristics of a period of construction. In addition, because they employed local materials and responded to local neighborhood cultural associations, many of them are unique to themselves.

Intact Resources

For the most part, buildings and structures built during the period of Federal Relief remain remarkably intact. Window and door alterations have occurred, although most are minimal and do not deter from the original appearance of the building. Most have retained their original plans, though some functions have changed. Most restroom facilities have been modernized to varying degrees, with new plumbing, stalls, etc. Deterioration and lack of renovations have generally been the greatest problem at some of the buildings, especially those at Seward Park Fish Hatchery, which is no longer in use. Some buildings have received large additions, such as the Van Asselt Community Center. The Camp Long Club House has received a sensitive addition, as well as other renovations that are sympathetic to the original design.

Camp Long Complex

Perhaps the largest federal relief project completed in Seattle was the West Seattle Recreation Center, which included the West Seattle Golf Course, the West Seattle Stadium and Camp Long.

The Camp Long complex included ten cabins (above right), designed to resemble the log cabins of the early European American settlers; a climbing rock (at right) now known as Schurman Rock; and an office/clubhouse (at right), a cobblestone building with classic WPA stylistic detailing and intricate stonework.

FEDERAL RELIEF 1935-1943

Buildings & Structures

Table 8: Federal Relief Era Remaining Buildings and Structures

Remaining Resources	Year Built	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Beer Sheva Park comfort station	1940			Constructed using cobblestones salvaged from repaved city streets.
Brighton Playfield shelter house	1933			
Camp Long cabins (10)	1938	Clark Schurman		Designed to resemble log cabins of early European American settlers.
Camp Long climbing rock	1940	Clark Schurman		Schurman Rock.
Camp Long office/ clubhouse	1941			
Carkeek Park stove shelter				Built by Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).
Cascade Playground comfort station	1938			
Cascade Playground retaining walls	1936			
Cascade Playground wading pool	1939			
Colman Playfield shelter house	1938	Arthur Wheatley		
Green Lake Park caretaker's tool house	1934			
Gilman Playfield shelter house	1932			
Highland Park Playground pool	1937			

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

FEDERAL RELIEF 1935-1943

Buildings & Structures

Remaining Resources	Year Built	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Highland Park Playground shelter house	1937			
Highland Park Playground tennis court	1937			
Jefferson Park Golf Course clubhouse	1936			
Laurelhurst Community Center	1935			
Lincoln Park bathhouse	1941	Loveless, Fay & Lamont		Constructed with private funds donated by the family of Laurence Colman.
Madrona Playground shelter house	1938			
Montlake Community Center	1935			
Observatory Tennis Courts	1939			
Ravenna Park shelter house	1932			
Seward Park Fish Hatchery house	1937			
Seward Park Fish Hatchery house and garage	1937			
Seward Park Fish Hatchery pump house	1937			
Van Asselt Playground Community Center	1938			Remodeled with large addition in the late 1970's.

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

FEDERAL RELIEF 1935-1943

Buildings & Structures

Remaining Resources	Year Built	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Victory Heights shelter house	1938			Originally built by King County.
West Seattle Golf Course clubhouse	1942	Young & Richardson		Numerous additions and alterations in 1953.
West Seattle Golf Course shop	1940			
West Seattle Stadium north stands	1936			South bleachers replaced in 1961.
Woodland Park Zoo comfort station (water tower)	1931			
Woodland Park Zoo commissary	1930			Formerly “Floral Hall,” then shops.

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

SUBURBAN GROWTH 1945-1964

In the years following World War II, American development patterns changed dramatically. Troops returning from the war purchased homes in record numbers. This growth in new home construction, coupled with increased automobile ownership and extended freeways, led to exponential suburban growth.

During this period, Seattle's city limits were extended north some 60 blocks to 145th Street. A rapidly expanding population, including "baby boom" children, spurred the development of many neighborhood parks and playgrounds and a record number of new park structures.

While some of the new parks were acquired with Parks Department funds, others were annexed from King County or purchased with monies contributed by local improvement districts. Neighbors in certain areas chose to levy additional taxes on their properties in order to fund not only land acquisition but also park improvements.

This rapid expansion of park facilities was characterized by a new focus on the neighborhood, and especially on a recreation movement that produced a number of playfields and playgrounds to accommodate active field sports. The Parks Department focus turned from building a city-wide park system to focusing on the recreation needs of new, decentralized neighborhoods that were generally not in close proximity to City resources. New parks and playgrounds were generally smaller in size and informal in design and included facilities specifically for children.

Many of the parks, playgrounds, buildings and structures built during this period still exist.

Construction of Interstate 5 allowed residents of Seattle's northern and southern suburbs to easily drive to downtown jobs.

SUBURBAN GROWTH 1945-1964

Parks/ Playgrounds

The line between a park and a playground blurred as a new Suburban Growth attitude toward parks emerged and the focus shifted from parks designed for passivity in nature to parks designed for recreation and fun.

View Ridge Playfield was designed for neighborhood recreation.

Physical Characteristics

Spatial Organization. Parks and playgrounds built during this era were generally informal in design, a reflection of their recreative purpose. Often the design was based on accommodation of recreational facilities, such as sports fields, tennis courts, and play areas.

Natural Systems and Features. To accommodate recreational activities, land was generally flat. Often, the larger parcels still available were former farms or sanitary land fills.

Views and Vistas. Views were less important, since the purpose of the park was activity, not meditation or aesthetic experience.

Circulation. Entrances to parks and playgrounds were controlled but not formal and would generally consist of a gate in the chain-link fence or a path with no fence at all. Often parking areas provided the primary access to the park as opposed to the park entrance directly fronting onto the street. Some parks, such as Matthews Beach, were located farther away from neighboring houses, many of which had yet to be built, so a parking area was necessary.

Buildings and Structures. Buildings and structures to serve the recreation needs of the park or playground were generally provided and might include a comfort station, field house, shelter, or swimming pool.

Dahl Playfield was located on a peat bog, which provided a large flat area for active recreation.

Play equipment at Dahl Playfield included a swing set, jungle gym and sand box.

SUBURBAN GROWTH 1945-1964

Parks/ Playgrounds

Vegetation. The palette of plant materials was fairly limited. Although a profusion of nurseries and imported plants increased the availability of new species, plants were chosen for ease of maintenance. The result was that new parks featured an even smaller variety of plants.

Significance

Parks and playgrounds built during the Suburban Growth era exemplify attributes toward recreation and strong patterns of land use which occurred during this period. They are also associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Intact Resources

Being fairly recent in history, most of the parks and playgrounds developed during the period remain.

Victory Heights Playground featured a flat recreation area surrounded by native vegetation.

Table 9: Suburban Growth Era Remaining Parks/Playgrounds

Remaining Resources	Year Established	Year Developed	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Bitter Lake Playfield	1961	1964			
Dahl Playfield	1952	1959			
Albert Davis Park	1964	1965			
Licton Springs Park	1960	1975	Jones & Jones		
Matthews Beach Park	1951	1962	D. Wilson, LArch		
Meadowbrook Playfield	1960	1964			
Northacres Park	1963	1963			
Pinehurst Playfield	1954				
Sacajawea Playground	1961	1971			
Soundview Playfield	1953	1961			
Victory Heights PG	1954				Acquired through annexation.
View Ridge Playfield	1949	1955			

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark

SUBURBAN GROWTH 1945-1964

Buildings & Structures

Buildings and structures built to serve Suburban Growth era parks and playgrounds emphasized utility over aesthetics to provide for recreation and comfort at low cost and low maintenance. It should be noted, however, that the modified industrial style – simple, box-like forms, sheer surfaces, flat roofs, and lack of ornamentation – was the dominant and accepted architectural style of the time for most public buildings.

Physical Characteristics

Typical Types and Uses. A great number and variety of buildings and structures were constructed during this period to serve the recreative functions of parks and playgrounds. They included swimming pools, bathhouses, restrooms, and shelter houses, among many others. Reflective of the new focus on neighborhoods, buildings and structures were also built to serve local needs, such as community centers, administration buildings, and parks maintenance facilities.

Location and Siting. With the informal designs of the parks, buildings and structures were generally sited to maximize their utility and proximity to the amenities provided at the park.

Style. Most Suburban Growth era buildings and structures were simple and utilitarian, with modified industrial style designs that placed emphasis on function. This industrial-looking design approach allowed for efficient construction and the use of the same design in several parks.

Materials and Construction Methods. Concrete block, brick, cast-in-place concrete, and metal window and door frames were typical materials. These materials provided relatively inexpensive, yet permanent and durable, structures.

The Matthews Beach Park bathhouse reflects the simple utilitarian designs of the period that emphasized function over aesthetics.

Parks and Recreation's first permanent and exclusive administration headquarters.

SUBURBAN GROWTH 1945-1964

Buildings & Structures

Significance

Buildings and structures designed and built during the Suburban Growth era are representative of post-WWII architectural design and reflect the City's approach to recreational facilities during this period. The Department often built comfort stations and other common building types to standardized designs, which have left a strong imprint on the park system due to the quantity built.

Intact Resources

Being relatively new, most of the buildings and structures developed during the period remain, with many retaining their original design features.

Table 10: Suburban Growth Era Remaining Buildings & Structures

Remaining Resources	Year Built	Architect/Designer	Historic Status[1]	Notable Features & Comments
Atlantic Nursery service building	1952			
Carkeek Park residence	1955	Durham, Anderson & Freed		
Carkeek Park shop	1955	R. H. Ross, architect		
Dahl Playfield shelter house	1959	Donald Sherwood		
Lake City community center	1957	Peterson & Adams		Remodeled in 1965.
Loyal Heights community center	1950	Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson		
Matthews Beach Park bathhouse	1957	Lamont & Fey		Completed second phase in 1961.
Parks Department headquarters	1949	Young & Richardson		First permanent location of the Department of Parks & Recreation. Hawthorne school of influence.

1 N=National Register of Historic Places; S=State of Washington Heritage Register; C=City of Seattle Landmark